

## Message Text

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R 052247Z APR 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
XMT AMEMBASSY FREETOWN  
AMEMBASSY LOME  
AMEMBASSY BANGUI  
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU  
AMEMBASSY LAGOS  
AMEMBASSY ACCRA  
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA  
AMEMBASSY DAKAR  
AMEMBASSY KIGALI  
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY  
AMEMBASSY MBABANE  
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY  
AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA  
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT  
AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO  
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA  
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE  
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO  
AMEMBASSY BISSAU  
AMEMBASSY GABORONE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS BRIEFING, APRIL 5, 1978

FOLLOWING IS AN UNOFFICIAL, UNCORRECTED EXCERPT FROM THE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS BRIEFING. IF NECESSARY OFFICIAL  
VERSION WILL FOLLOW.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THE POSSIBILITY OF F-5 PLANE  
SALES TO SUDAN?

A: YES.

WE HAVE DECIDED TO SELL F-5'S TO SUDAN, TWELVE OF THEM.  
THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE SUDANESE  
HAVE IMPROVED MARKEDLY OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS WITH THE  
RESUMPTION OF U.S. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND THE INITIATION  
OF A LIMITED ARMS SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP.

IN 1977 THE UNITED STATES SOLD SUDAN SIX C-130 TRANSPORT  
AIRCRAFT, THREE OF WHICH HAVE ALREADY BEEN DELIVERED. IN  
A STATESMAN-LIKE EFFORT IN 1977 PRESIDENT NUMAYRI -- WHO,  
BY THE WAY, IS EXPECTED TO BECOME OAU CHAIRMAN THIS  
COMING JULY -- HE LAUNCHED A CAMPAIGN OF RECONCILIATION  
WITH SUDANESE DISSIDENTS AND RELEASED SOME 1200 POLITICAL  
PRISONERS AND ISSUED A GENERAL AMNESTY TO ALL HIS  
OPPONENTS.

NOW, SUDAN'S AIR DEFENSE CAPABILITY CURRENTLY IS SERIOUSLY  
ERODED.

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I MIGHT POINT OUT THAT SUDAN'S LAST MILITARY TIES WITH THE  
USSR WERE SEVERED IN 1977.

IN RESPONSE TO A SUDANESE REQUEST A MILITARY SURVEY TEAM  
WAS SENT TO SUDAN LAST AUGUST. THAT TEAM RECOMMENDED  
THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD SELL A MODEST AIR DEFENSE  
PACKAGE OF TWELVE F-5'S AND SUPPORTING RADAR AS OUR  
CONTRIBUTION TO A MULTILATERAL EFFORT OF WESTERN NATIONS  
TO MEET SUDAN'S DEFENSIVE REQUIREMENTS.

SUDAN, A MODERATE NATION WHICH IS DEDICATED TO THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF ITS VAST AGRICULTURAL POTENTIAL IS PLAYING  
A SIGNIFICANT MEDIATING ROLE IN BOTH THE AFRICAN AND  
ARAB WORLDS AND BY THAT I MEAN THE CHAD-LIBYA CONFLICT  
AND SUDANESE SUPPORT OF PRESIDENT SADAT'S PEACE INITIATIVE.

Q: WHY DID YOU MENTION THE RELEASE OF PRISONERS? OF WHAT  
RELEVANCE IS THAT TO THE DECISION?

A: AS IN ALL OUR MILITARY ASSISTANCE DECISIONS WE FAC-  
TOR IN HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS.

Q: WHAT POLITICAL AND SECURITY RELATIONSHIPS WERE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN THIS DECISION?

A: I MENTIONED IN THE STATEMENT THAT SUDAN'S AIR DEFENSE CAPABILITY IS CURRENTLY ERODED BECAUSE THEY SEVERED THEIR LAST MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIET UNION IN 1977; AND IT'S --

Q: WHO IS THREATENING THEM?

A: WELL THERE IS GENERAL INSTABILITY IN THE AREA AS YOU KNOW.

Q: WHAT AREA?  
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A: IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND IN THE HORN OF AFRICA, AND IN NAMIBIA, CHAD, AND THERE IS QUITE A BIT GOING ON.

Q: THESE ARE NATURAL QUESTIONS BECAUSE ARMS ARE SUPPOSED TO BE FOR DEFENSIVE PURPOSES.

SO THEY NEED THESE PLANES TO DEFEND THEMSELVES AGAINST WHOM?

A: I DID NOT SAY THAT THEY WERE UNDER ANY SPECIFIC THREAT. I SAID THAT THERE IS GENERAL INSTABILITY IN THE AREA AND THAT THE SURVEY TEAM WHICH WENT OUT THERE FOUND THAT THEIR DEFENSIVE CAPABILITY HAD BEEN ERODED BECAUSE OF THEIR SEVERING OF MILITARY TIES WITH THE SOVIET UNION.

Q: SO IT'S PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE SITUATION IN THE HORN, PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE LIBYA AND CHAD DISPUTE -- AND PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT I GUESS YOU MEAN BY THE MIDDLE EAST. THEY'RE SORT OF PART OF ALL THREE.

A: YES, I THINK THAT ALL THREE OF THOSE SECURITY SITUATIONS, ONE WOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT IN ASSESSING THE DEFENSIVE NEEDS OF THE SUDAN.

Q: AND WHY DID YOU MENTION THEIR AGRICULTURAL PLANS? WHAT RELEVANCE DOES THAT HAVE TO THE SHIPPING OF WAR PLANES?

A: I THINK THAT PROBABLY THE REASON WHY IT'S IN THERE IS TO INDICATE THAT SUDAN IS GENUINELY CONCERNED WITH  
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ITS OWN DEVELOPMENT AND ITS OWN ECONOMIC PROGRESS AND  
THAT IT IS NOT THAT THESE ARE VIEWED AS "DEFENSIVE" ...  
RATHER THAN --

WOULD THESE PLANES BE TRANSFERRED TO EGYPT IN THE EVENT  
OF A MIDDLE EAST WAR?

A: I CAN'T ANSWER THAT QUESTION. I WILL BE GLAD TO  
CHECK AND SEE WHETHER THERE ARE ANY PROVISIONS IN THE  
AGREEMENT WHICH, OR BY WHICH WE WOULD HAVE A VOICE IN  
WHETHER THOSE PLANES COULD BE TRANSFERRED OUTSIDE THE  
COUNTRY.

Q: ON A RELATED ISSUE, IS THERE ANY DECISION YET ON THE  
DEFENSIVE WEAPONS DELIVERY TO SOMALIA? THEY ARE IN THE  
SAME AREA. THEY CUT TIES WITH THE RUSSIANS LAST YEAR,  
AND THEY HAVE A BAD AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM.

A: I HAVE NOTHING NEW AT ALL ON THE SOMALIA THING FOR  
YOU.

A: YOU SAID THAT THIS SALE TO THE SUDAN IS PART, THE  
U.S. PART OF A WESTERN EFFORT. COULD YOU PROVIDE SOME  
DETAILS ON THE OTHERS? WHAT WESTERN COUNTRIES, AND

WHAT THEY MAY SELL?

A: LET ME SEE WHETHER I CAN GET YOU A LIST OF THE OTHER  
PARTICIPANTS IN THIS EFFORT.

Q: IN DECIDING TO SHIP ARMS TO SUDAN, DID YOU TAKE INTO  
ACCOUNT THAT DELICATE MIDDLE EAST BALANCE THAT WAS  
BEING WEIGHED WHEN YOU MADE THE DECISIONS ON SAUDI  
ARABIA, EGYPT AND ISRAEL?

Q: DO YOU THINK THIS WILL AFFECT THE ARAB-ISRAELI ARMS  
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BALANCE? LET ME PUT IT THAT WAY.

A: I REALLY DON'T HAVE A JUDGMENT ON THAT FOR YOU.  
I'M SORRY.

Q: ARE THERE ANY OTHER SHIPMENTS TO OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES  
OR TO THE SUDAN IN THE PIPELINE? I MEAN, IN PREPARA-

TION FOR LETTERS OF OFFER TO CONGRESS.

A: I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON ANY OTHERS FOR YOU. THAT  
DOESN'T MEAN THAT THERE AREN'T, BUT WE ARE NOT IN A  
POSITION TO ANNOUNCE ANYTHING ELSE.

Q: LET ME ADD TO THAT: IF YOU CAN TELL US WHETHER THE  
SUDANESE ARE CAPABLE OF FLYING THESE PLANES THAT WOULD  
HELP -- OF IF THEY HAVE TO IMPORT PILOTS.

A: WELL, I WILL SEE WHAT I CAN GET.  
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## Message Attributes

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